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NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL

MAGNESIUM SULPHATE IN CHOREA.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association*, quoting from an Italian contemporary, reports gratifying success from subcutaneous and intramuscular injections of a 25 per cent solution of magnesium sulphate in a case of extremely severe chorea, in a boy of thirteen. The first symptoms had been noted twelve days before. The child was able to sleep at night and lost the excitement and restlessness which had rendered slumber impossible. He had had to be tied in bed to prevent injury from the spasmodic jerking. In a month he was able to feed himself and with the exception of mitral insufficiency, was well in six weeks.

DIGESTIBILITY OF BACON.—The *Journal of Biological Chemistry* states that the digestibility of bacon is approximately the same as that of other soft fat and the nitrogen is as well digested as that of other meat.

REPORTING INFECTIOUS DISEASE.—That a small fee stimulates physicians to report cases of infectious diseases, has been proved in Islip, N. Y. The payment of twenty-five cents, as authorized by law, for each case, resulted in twelve physicians receiving \$640.00, or an average of \$53.00 each.

STERILITY OF CATGUT.—Two writers in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* report experiments in sterilizing catgut. Chromicised catgut is slightly more resistant to sterilization by heat than plain catgut. The infection found is either within or on the catgut itself and is not present in the immersion oil alone. From 28 to 30 pounds pressure of live steam is absolutely necessary to sterilize catgut such as that submitted to them.

PAROTITIS AFTER OPERATION.—The *Journal of Surgery, Gynecology and Obstetrics* describes several cases in which inflammation of the parotids followed operations. It is more apt to occur after abdominal operations; it is favored by dry conditions of the mouth and the lack of fluids in the body. A good way to excite the flow of saliva is to allow a patient to suck a stick of lemon candy after the operation. Administering saline solution by hypodermoclysis is an accurate and effective way to supply the body with fluid.

TREATMENT OF EXOPHTHALMIC GOITER.—A French experimenter has injected 1 c.c. of 80 per cent alcohol directly into the thyroid in

the treatment of exophthalmic goiter. This was repeated every week or two. In some of the patients the goiter was reduced, the headache lessened or disappeared, and the other symptoms improved.

COLD IN PNEUMONIA.—In a letter to the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the writer says that those who have been accustomed to the use of the fresh air treatment of tuberculosis and pneumonie, recognize as a fundamental necessity, that the patient shall never be uncomfortably cold. Discomfort is incompatible with rest, shivering is nature's method of raising the temperature; depression is to be carefully avoided. If the patient is uncomfortable it is due to faulty technique and in the majority of cases, the nurse is the one who is responsible for the failure. If patients are properly protected below the mattress (a layer of newspapers, blankets, etc.), as well as above, the pillows properly arranged, bed socks and shields supplied, they can stand almost any degree of cold with comfort. Their bodies may be in Florida, their noses in the Arctic regions. The skin must be red, not blue; they must be warm, not cold. Only cold air will beat down their fever, stimulate their hearts and supply pure, unbreathed air. Exhausted air can produce no more heat than wood ashes. Rain, fog and high wind should be deflected. The writer considers the comfort of the nurse, attention to her clothing, shoes and surroundings, as of the first importance to the comfort of the patient.

PREVENTION OF PERITONITIS.—An Italian physician is accustomed to ward off acute diffuse peritonitis after a laparotomy in which there has been contamination by septic material, by keeping the patient in a half-sitting position and giving 4 liters of saline solution by the drop method of proctoclysis. He chiefly relies upon cleansing the contaminated part with ether, after it has been washed. He has been successful in preventing peritonitis even when the tissues were much soiled.

GLUTEN FLOUR FOR DIABETICS.—In answer to an enquiry, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* says there are many so-called gluten flours on the market which are extremely dangerous for use in diabetis, because of the large proportion of starch they contain. A safe gluten flour manufactured by Herman Barker, Somerville, Mass., has been accepted by the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry, for inclusion in new and non-official remedies. It comes in three grades: A contains 4 per cent carbohydrates; B, 7 per cent; C, 12 per cent. Certain flours whose protein element is derived from the soy bean, or milk casein, may be used for muffins, bread, etc., being admitted to the N. N. R. list.